

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MORALES BERMUDEZ ISSUES APPEAL FOR LABOR RESPONSIBILITY

REF: LIMA 7932

1. PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ ON OCCASION OF SEPTEMBER 28 INAUGURATION OF COPPER REFINERY AT ILO CALLED UPON WORKERS TO ENGAGE IN "PARTICIPATION AND DIALOGUE" IN THEIR PURSUIT OF "JUST SOLUTIONS TO DEMANDS". HE ASKED WORKERS TO REFRAIN FROM STRIKES WHICH PARALYZE PRODUCTION. "WHAT PERU NEEDS", DECLARED MORALES BERMUDEZ, "IS CEASELESS WORK AND MORE PRODUCTION."

2. MORALES BERMUDEZ SPECIFICALLY CALLED UPON WORKERS AT SOUTHERN PERU COPPER CORPORATION'S TOQUEPALA MINE TO CEASE THEIR STRIKE WHICH, ACCORDING TO MORALES BERMUDEZ, IS COSTING PERU OVER \$100,000 DAILY. "THERE ARE WAYS", STATED MORALES BERMUDEZ, "TO BRING PROBLEMS BEFORE THE COMPANY AND THE GOVERNMENT, BUT THESE ACTIONS (SPCC STRIKE) ARE NOT THE WAY BECAUSE THEY DISTORT PROPER STRIKE CRITERIA". MORALES BERMUDEZ DID NOT BLAME THE WORKERS AND SAID THAT WITH INCREASING POLITICAL AWARENESS, THEY WOULD CEASE TO BE "MISLED BY BAD ELEMENTS...AN OLIGARCHY OF 4 OR 5 PERSONS WHO CREATE CONFLICTS AND PARALYZE PRODUCTION, THUS AFFECTING THE ECONOMY".

3. THE WORDS OF MORALES BERMUDEZ WERE ECHOED BY ENERGY AND MINES MINISTER LA VERA WHO COMMENTED AT ILO THAT CONTRACT

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DEMANDS OF AN ADVERSARY NATURE WERE OUTDATED IN REVOLUTIONARY

PERU. LA VERA SAID THAT WORKERS SHOULD INSTEAD PRESENT "PROPOSALS FOR PARTICIPATION".

4. COMMENT: GOP LEADERS HAVE CHARACTERIZED NEED TO INCREASE PRODUCTION AS A TOP PRIORITY IN PHASE II OF THE REVOLUTION. THE APPEAL TO WORKERS FOR DIALOGUE INSTEAD OF STRIKES HAS YET TO ELICIT FAVORABLE RESPONSE FROM UNIONS; IN FACT, NUMBER OF STRIKES HAS BEEN INCREASING. STRIKES ARE BASICALLY ROOTED IN ECONOMIC CAUSES, BUT POLITICAL MOTIVATION IS INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT AS FAR LEFT AND COMMUNIST UNIONS STEP-UP ORGANIZING EFFORTS. RETURN OF CERTAIN ACTIVIST UNION LEADERS FROM EXILE MAY LEAD TO GREATER LABOR UNREST, ESPECIALLY IN MINING SECTOR.

5. IN SPECIFIC CASE OF TOQUEPALA MINE UNION, GOP CALL FOR DIALOGUE LIKELY TO BE FOLLOWED BY FIRM ACTION. TOQUEPALA UNION, WHICH IS INTO THE SECOND MONTH OF STRIKE AT THE MINE, IS UNDER POLITICAL CONTROL OF FAR LEFT MINE FEDERATION LED BY RECENTLY RETURNED DEPORTEE VICTOR CUADROS. SPCC OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD EMBASSY THAT UNLESS UNION CALLS OFF STRIKE WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, GOP WILL DECLARE IT ILLEGAL (MOST STRIKES AFFECTING ONLY PART OF AN OPERATION ARE ILLEGAL UNDER PERUVIAN LAW) AND "APPLY THE LAW" INCLUDING ARREST AND DETENTION OF UNION LEADERS.

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